

Dr. D. Cover Sheet**Michael Higley-Vance****September 22, 2013**

EDU7002-8	Dr. Donna Rice
Educational Research Methodology	Assignment #6: Research Methodology

Assignment: Based on your emerging prospective research topic, select from the array of research approaches presented in your text (and in any other sources you wish to consult just be sure to cite them!)

Develop three hypothetical research approaches for the Statement of the Problem and the Purpose. For each approach, briefly describe how the approach would be applied to the Purpose. Finally compare and contrast the three approaches in terms of the advantages of each and disadvantages of each.

Length: 4-8 pages (app. 350 words per page). Include 3-5 references.

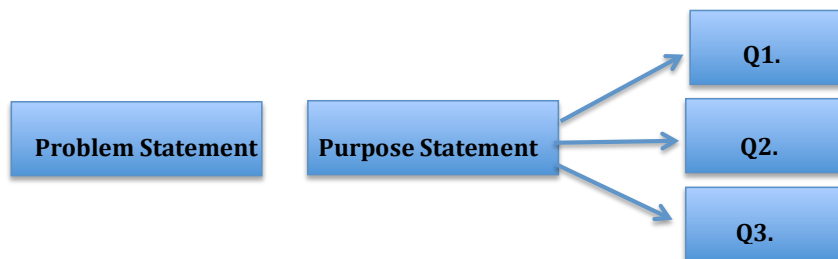
Faculty Use Only

Michael excellent work on this paper! See comments – you definitely have a good grasp on the different types of research available to you!

Your approaches are logical – I am looking forward to seeing which one you will choose (for this class anyway).

I am excited about seeing your questions. Make sure to include the Statement of the Problem and Purpose so I can check for alignment.

Dr. Donna Rice **100** **98** **9/27/13**



Grading Key

10 Excellent	9 Above Average	8 Adequate	7 Needs Improvement	6 Not Acceptable
25 Excellent	20 Above Average	15 Adequate	10 Needs Improvement	5 Not Acceptable

Content 70%

- 10 Demonstrated a well-developed focus (Introduction)
- 10 Thorough points of development (Listed major points to be covered)
- 10 A logical pattern or organization of discussion ideas and concepts required in activity (used at least two levels of headings)
- 10 Achieved stated learning outcome(s)
- 10 Integrated key concepts and terms from course materials
- 10 Evaluated and applied concepts learned
- 10 Demonstrated learning through use of examples and/or illustrations
- 10 Supported insights and assertions through research and use of additional outside academic resources
- 10 Met length requirement
- 10 Ended with a conclusion that summarized paper without adding new information and without repeating introduction

| 100/100 Total

Writing 30%

- | 24/25 Appropriate and precise language
- 25 Proper use of APA
- 25 Clear divisions between the writer's voice and the sources used to support claims

| 24/25 Consistent use of standard American English in grammar and punctuation

| 98/100 Total

Three Approaches to the Research: A Compare and Contrast

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Three Approaches to the Research: A Compare and Contrast

My potential research topic is to investigate how intrinsic motivation and learner self-efficacy may contribute to the increase in online course participation and successful course completion. These two learner characteristics remain the least researched characteristics of online learning participants. At this point in my topic development a research method has not been established, therefore the purpose of this paper is to propose three different research approaches aligned with my potential research topic, discuss how each one aligns, and then compare and contrast them to identify advantages and disadvantages of each.

There are a number of research methods and approaches that are very different from one another and can be used in the research process. There are also different research designs and ways to collect data. However, there are only two main methods in which research can be conducted: Qualitative and Quantitative (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Qualitative research is described by Taber (2012), as a process of gathering and summarizing information using narrative methods and quantitative research as simply summarizing information using numbers. Qualitative and quantitative researchers often operate with a different set of assumptions about the world and ways of learning about it. However, a mixed design approach can have its benefits if used to identify relevant phenomena, to interpret and explain quantitative and qualitative data, and to conduct effective multistage analysis. Qualitative and quantitative studies both have their

place in the research field and include four major classifications of research designs (Casebeer & Verhoef, 1997). A few of these designs include observational research, correlational research, true experiments, and quasi-experiments (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

Qualitative Research

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), qualitative research has two different approaches. The first is a focus on phenomena as it happens naturally and the second to study the depth and breadth of the phenomena. Qualitative research studies tend to be focused on differences in subject characteristics and focus on ways to understand and interpret social interactions. Qualitative research seeks to answer the why instead of the how and is often used to gain an understanding into behaviors, attitudes, motivation, and personal values of others (Shuttleworth, 2008, September 14; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The design of the research study usually emerges during the research process and consists of narrative descriptions and visual representations of the data, rather than numbers. These methods can be found being utilized by researchers in the field of history, biology, sociology, and education (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

Advantages and Disadvantages. Qualitative research proves to be less of a time constraint than quantitative research designs however, qualitative methods still require a lot of planning, consideration, and fidelity to the process (Shuttleworth, 2008, September 14). Data in this research design cannot be analyzed in the same way as quantitative mathematical results because qualitative research is mostly subjective (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Researchers often permit the data to drive their research, providing them with different interpretations however, due to the subjective nature of qualitative data researchers are more inclined to accusations of

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Comment [1]: 9. Avoid the use of the phrase "research study" since the two words together are redundant. Dissertation Best Practices p 15 – Best Practices for Developing the Research Problem.

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bias (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). Most frameworks of qualitative research are typically unique and prove hard to recreate (Shuttleworth, 2008, September 14; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Venkatesh et al., 2013).

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is the most commonly used method in the research community (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). This type of research involves investigating the possible correlations among two or more phenomena, test a hypothesis, and make predictions based on the information collected (Shuttleworth, 2008, March 7; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Quantitative research focuses mainly on statistical data or quantities of something and its results are based on a numeric and statistical analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). It is important that the research be constructed so that other researchers are able to repeat the study and obtain the same results when applied to other groups (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Explorable.com, 2013).

Advantages & Disadvantages. Quantitative research methods can be expensive and require a lot of time and commitment to design (Shuttleworth, 2008, March 7). These types of research is not unlike qualitative research designs because they too must be carefully planned. Quantitative methods usually require extensive data analysis and require an appropriately defined number of control groups (Shuttleworth, 2008, March 7). This field of study can be problematic for researchers in the social sciences, education, anthropology and psychology subject areas because studying human nature is much more multidimensional than studies that yield statistical data and numbers (Shuttleworth, 2008, March 7; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

The Approaches

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This section of the paper presents three different research approaches aligned to the investigation of how intrinsic motivation and learner self-efficacy may contribute to the increase in online course participation and successful course completion.

Case Study

In a case study the process of research is given to the development of a particular person, group, or situation observed over a period of time (Eisenhardt, 1989; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Shuttleworth, 2008, April 1; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In this case study the research is centered on the behaviors of K-12 online public education students. Specifically, the intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy of these students that may contribute to their online course participation and successful course completion.

During an academic school year data will be collected on the rate of progress in each of the enrolled online classes. A student sample from the elementary, middle, and high school online course program will be collected. The total number of enrolled students will be compared with the number of successfully completed online classes. A student interest survey will be conducted in August, January, and May to identify changes and trends in student perceptions of online course work. Additionally, environmental, economic, and social factors will be recorded for each student to determine if these factors have any substantial affect on student motivation. Student perceptions of online classroom environments, self-efficacy, and perceptions of intrinsic motivation collected from interest surveys will be analyzed and compared to determine if student motivation and self-efficacy contributes to online course participation and successful course completion.

Grounded Theory Study

In 1967 Glaser and Strauss published a book entitled '*The Discovery of Grounded Theory*'. Glaser and Strauss outlined the methodology that derived theories of human behavior from observed data. The major purpose of a grounded theory approach is to begin with existing data and use that data to develop an emerging theory (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Using this approach, the focus of this study will be on the behaviors of K-12 online public education students. Specifically, the behaviors of motivation and student self-efficacy and how these characteristics may contribute to online course participation and course completion. Using a grounded theory approach will help to study the thoughts and feelings of students during online class participation. One of the main differences between grounded theory and other qualitative research methods is its approach to theory development (Urquhart, Lehmann, & Myers, 2010). Grounded theory suggests that there should be an ongoing analysis of the data (Urquhart, et al., 2010). The data collected in this study will consist primarily of student perceptions, perspectives, and course completion rates. Analysis of the data collected will begin immediately and is part of the process, which drives the constant development of concepts and relationships.

Survey Research

Businesses, retail outlets, and media organizations have spent years using survey results to identify what consumers like, how they feel, and think about their products however, this type of research is a relatively new style of data collection in the scientific field (Shuttleworth, 2008, July 5; Calderwood, 2013). The main purpose of using a survey research design approach, in this study, is to assess the opinions, frequency, and characteristics (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010) of online students in a K-12 online public education program. The focus of the survey will be to identify motivation and self-efficacy characteristics of elementary, middle, and high school students online and create a hypothesis about how these characteristics may contribute to online

course participation and course completion. Much like the procedures taken in the case study approach a student interest survey will be conducted in August, January, and May to identify changes and trends in student perceptions of online course work. Additionally, environmental, economic, and social factors will be recorded to determine if these factors have any substantial affect on student motivation. The data collected from the student surveys about perceptions of classroom environments, self-efficacy, and intrinsic motivation will be analyzed and trends found compared to determine if student motivation and self-efficacy contributes to online course participation and successful course completion. The significant down fall of using a survey research approach is that student opinions change, and the potential for bias and inaccuracy of data is a constant factor to consider (Shuttleworth, 2008, July 5).

Conclusion

This paper sought to compare and contrast Qualitative and Quantitative research methods, align three different research methods to the prospective research topic, and discuss advantages and disadvantages of each. Each approach discussed allows for the collection, comparison, and evaluation of the data. Each requires a fair amount of work and cooperation of others to reach its goals. Each research approach has its own strengths and weaknesses and each variable dependent on the topic and ways in which the research will be conducted (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Some studies even make use of both Qualitative and Quantitative research designs however, scientists and researchers often view the use of both methods as a conflict of interest (Casebeer & Verhoef, 1997).

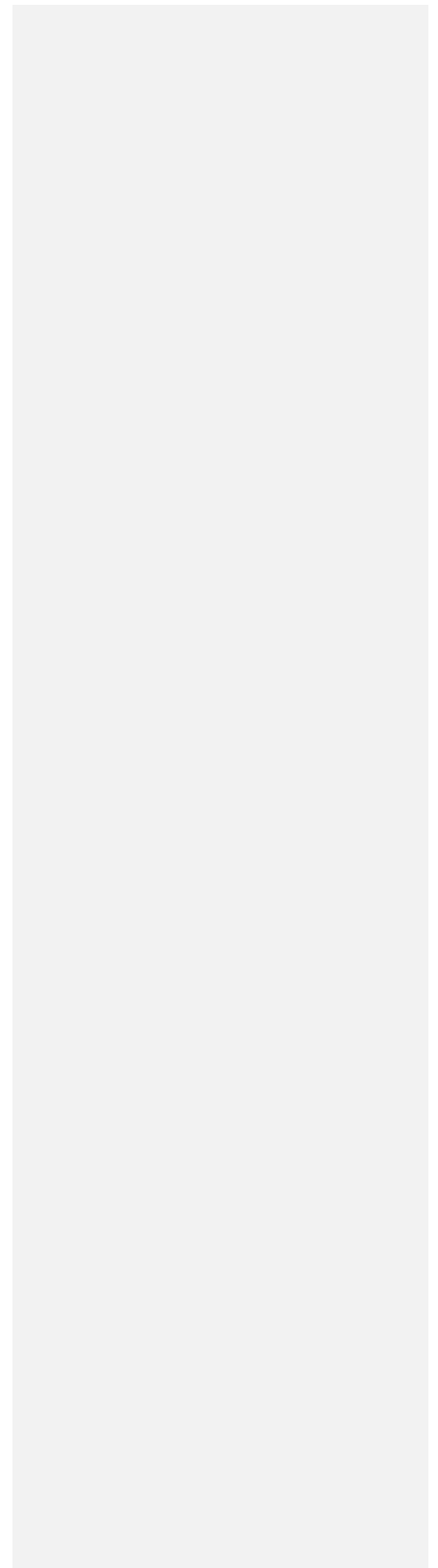
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